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SUBJECT: BELGIUM: NEW LETERME GOVERNMENT EXPECTED NOVEMBER
25

REF: BRUSSELS 1579

Belgian media report that the current Van Rompuy government will resign Wednesday, November 25, allowing a new Leterme government to be sworn in the same day. The three ministerial positions that will change between governments are Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Public Enterprises and Public Works, which will all be held by members of the Flemish Christian Democratic Party (CD&V). Former PM (March - December 2008) and current FM (since July 2009) Yves Leterme will replace PM Herman Van Rompuy who was selected November 19 as the first permanent President of the European Council. Vice PM and Minister for Public Enterprises Steven Vanackere will become Foreign Minister and retain his Vice Premiership. Former Minister for Public Enterprises and Public Works Inge Vervotte, who resigned in December 2008 along with Leterme, will reclaim that portfolio. Outside of the Cabinet, former CD&V PM Jean-Luc Dehaene will come back from retirement as a "special negotiator" to seek a way forward on Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde and other pending institutional reform issues. Poloff confirmed the changes with one of FM Leterme's staff members.

GUTMAN

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